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Very little of the mythology of Micronesia has been recorded, but what we have shows clear relationships to Indonesia on the one hand and Polynesia on the other.

In Australia two main divisions may be distinguished. The mythology of the central and northern portion of Australia stands more or less alone, "and so far as its peculiar tales of totem ancestors are concerned, it seems to be unique." The tales of Southern and Eastern Australia, on the other hand, show certain resemblances to those of Melanesia. From West Australia and Tasmania there is practically nothing.

In the final chapter a series of migrations are outlined as a possible explanation of the various relationships indicated by this study.

The volume is furnished with a number of excellent plates, some of which are colored. These illustrate some of the most striking masks, figures, and carvings from Oceania. There is also a full bibliography, and notes giving the source of all quotations and references. Considering the imperfection of our knowledge, and giving due regard to the cautious statements of the author, this volume may be regarded as an excellent summary of the field covered.

ALBERT B. LEWIS

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BRIEF MENTION

DOCTRINAL

TAIT, ARTHUR J. *The Nature and Functions of the Sacraments*. London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1917. xiv+104 pages. \$1.25.

The surprising feature of this book is its date, which should have been 1867 and not 1917. For fifty years ago it was quite in order to combat the rising tide of Tractarianism by appeals to such Reformation theologians as Bullinger and John Jewel. But that in a work of the present day such appeals should still be made is startling, and that these sixteenth-century divines should still be regarded as final sources for Christian doctrine is, to say the least, depressing. It is quite in accord with this attitude that Dr. Tait tells us (p. 59) that the very last word on sacramental research has been spoken by the three "great" scholars "Goode, Mozley, and Dimock." This statement characterizes sufficiently the nature of this treatise and its value.

B. S. E.

DE TONQUÉDEC, JOSEPH. *Introduction a l'étude du merveilleux et du miracle*. Paris: Beauchesne, 1916. xi+461 pages.

The purpose of this book is to prepare the mind of the reader for what seems to the author to be a fair-minded attitude in the investigation of the problem of miracles. That there are a priori presuppositions in all arguments and in all judging of

testimony he recognizes. But there are some prejudices which are less consonant with all the facts of experience than are others. The author undertakes to show that general skepticism concerning the reality of miracles or the reliability of testimony to a miracle involves a dogmatic refusal to entertain seriously the possibility that the Catholic conception of a world ruled by a benevolent God free to adapt events to his purposes may be the true conception. If there are in fact unique events inexplicable by natural laws, we simply prevent ourselves from ascertaining those facts by an a priori skepticism.

In order to show that a prejudice in favor of supernatural events does not open the door wide to credulity, the author cites various instances of careful critical testing of testimony by those who believe in the possibility of miracles, but who are resolved not to be deceived. The conclusion is that a consideration of the problem on the basis of Catholic presuppositions is quite as respectable scientifically as is any other attitude.

As an introduction to further study the book is interesting. Without a detailed application of the method (such as the author insists must displace a general a priori distrust of miracles) to particular incidents, the argument, of course, leaves one entirely "in the air." But he has well carried out his purpose to show the reasonableness a priori of Catholic presuppositions. Whether these will stand the test of detailed historical criticism is another question.

G. B. S.

MCCONNELL, FRANCIS J. *Understanding the Scriptures*. New York: Methodist Book Concern, 1917. 144 pages. \$0.75.

This is a book of six chapters containing the Mendenhall Lectures delivered at De Pauw University. The point of view is indicated by this sentence: "Even very orthodox biblicists no longer insist that it is necessary to oppose the teaching that the first five books of the Bible were written at different times and by different men." The Bible is treated as the "Book of Life," "of Humanity," "of God," "of Christ," "of the Cross." These are interesting captions. Perhaps the most illuminating chapter is the one that treats the Bible as "full of the tingle and even the roar of the life out of which it was born." This enables us to understand the Scriptures as the product of the real world and genuine experiences of living men. Bishop McConnell also develops (pages 46-48) the principle of spiritual "awareness developed as the life becomes practiced to the doing of religious duty," which is most important in understanding the Bible.

O. S. D.

BARROW, GEORGE A. *The Validity of the Religious Experience*. Boston: Sherman, French & Co., 1917. xi+247 pages. \$1.50.

This work rests upon the conviction that theology must become a science whose subject-matter will be the facts of religious experience. In all scientific study there are, however, certain philosophical questions which must first be settled and which become the presuppositions of the specific science, such as the limitations of the field, the reality of the experience, the validity of the method, etc. These questions are philosophical, because they can only be determined in the light of truth as a whole. Before theology, or the science of religion, can begin its work there must be this preliminary philosophical investigation. It is this task which the author undertakes. This study gives the following results: there is a real, unique experience which we call religious; the test of religion is the test of sound reasoning applied to the facts of